



NON-HUMAN IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Dear colleagues, we are pleased to announce:

Non-human in anthropology II: Limits and boundaries of social science

which will be held on the

19th and 20th of November, 2011

in the premises of the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University in Prague

Anthropologists as well as scholars from a wide range of other disciplines of humanities, social, historical or environmental sciences are cordially welcome to participate. The conference is international, thus scholars from the Central European region as well as beyond are encouraged to apply.

In a few recent decades, interesting shifts within social sciences can be observed with old explanatory concepts having been altered or even displaced by new, more ambiguous ones. Thus “social” has been largely displaced by “culture” in what is now understood as cultural turn and others such as human, environment, society and even culture as such have been transformed significantly, their boundaries expanded, their content problematized. Dichotomies such as nature-culture, nature-society, subject-object, human-animal upon which explanations and understanding used to be based and which used to delimit scientific disciplines have become blurred and more complex, ambiguous and hybrid metaphors and concepts have come to the fore. Understanding is not to be sought at the poles of the dichotomies any more but rather in the space between them. Hybridity has been embraced and the figures of cyborg, vampire or ghost have left shadows in order to enter scientific thought, research and writing. The non-human and the ways it is intertwined with and incorporated in the human (and vice versa) as in the figures of cyborg or vampire have become key to comprehending humans and the world they live in. By acknowledging the importance of the non-human by social scientists while emphasizing hybridity allows for expanding the scope of social science and for pushing its limits and re-determining its boundaries.

But what is the position and role of social science in a world in which “nature” and “society” have merged into one another, the act of transgressing disciplinary boundaries has become a disciplinary necessity and scientific representation might be seen as creative as artistic one?

What are the outermost topics social scientists should engage with and what, if anything, should be left solely to philosophy, natural sciences or art? And are these distinctions still useful? What are the possibilities of cooperation and communication among these remote archipelagos of diverse traditions, approaches and practices? Are there some concepts that might assist us to “bridge the gap”?

The second Non-human in anthropology conference is here to address these and similar issues. The conference seeks to create an intellectually stimulating environment for the debate about the non-human of (social science) research and its role in re-defining the limits and boundaries of social science. We welcome papers addressing theoretical, methodological, and epistemological issues as well as papers dealing with particular non-human themes. With respect to the overarching interest in non-human and hybridity, wide range of topics can be addressed, among others:

- the relationship of human and non-human (animal, machine, etc.)
- the issues of material culture, space, place and landscape
- the relationship of science and art and the issue of scientific representation
- the border between social and natural sciences
- the relationship of science and activism, politics and power
- and many others

The conference in dates:

When: 19th and 20th November, 2011

Where: Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Humanities, U Kříže 8, Prague 5

Application deadline: 10th Sep., 2011

Abstracts are due: 10th Sep., 2011

Web: <http://www.fhs.cuni.cz/nonhuman>

E-mail: nonhuman@email.cz

Conference fees (due to technical issues payable at the first day of the conference in cash):

Students – 400 CZK
Others – 600 CZK

Please register on the conference web pages by 10th Sep., 2011 (=last day)

A collective monograph is to be published from selected conference papers by around December 2012

Articles for the collective monograph are due 30th Jan., 2012

Guidelines for the preparation of the article are to be found on the conference web pages.

On behalf of the conference team

Yours faithfully,

Mgr. Marco Stella & Karolína Pauknerová, PhD. & Petr Gibas, MSc.